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UNRRA SETS HOPEFUL PATTERN OF INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

by Vera Micheles Dean

Mrs. Dean was a member of Director General Lehman's temporary staff during the first session of the UNRRA Council.

THE far-reaching decisions of Cairo and Teheran have tended to obscure the significance of the work accomplished at the first session of the Council of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Yet this was the first occasion when the thirty-three United Nations and the eleven nations associated with them gathered together to map out a program of joint operations on a global scale. In perspective, perhaps the most important result of the Atlantic City conference is that it gave concrete assurance to the small nations that their interests will receive serious and sympathetic consideration on the part of the great powers. This assurance, much needed to counteract the fear that Britain, Russia and the United States might dispose of the future of Europe without consulting the small countries of that continent, helped to give content to the subsequent declaration of the Big Three at Teheran concerning the future of small nations.

It was inevitable, of course, that differences of opinion should arise among the delegates of forty-four nations, varying widely in their interests and traditions. Such differences as did appear, however, were due not to disagreement concerning the urgency of relief and rehabilitation measures, but to divergences concerning broader political and economic issues. In the absence of an over-all international organization in which such divergences might be discussed not only by the great powers but among all the united and associated nations, it was not surprising that issues going far beyond the problems of relief and rehabilitation should have been aired at Atlantic City.

The five main topics around which discussion centered were the scope of UNRRA activities, UNRRA's relations with United Nations supply agencies, the

method of distributing relief and rehabilitation supplies, the treatment of displaced persons, and the financing of UNRRA.

1. SCOPE OF UNRRA ACTIVITIES. Before the Council met there had been a tendency among some Americans to think of UNRRA as an agency which would be concerned not only with the immediate relief and rehabilitation of victims of war in liberated areas, as provided by the UNRRA Agreement signed at the White House on November 9, but also with the general post-war economic reorganization of Europe and Asia. This extreme view of the functions of UNRRA was discarded from the start at Atlantic City. The relief and rehabilitation supplies whose provision is to be insured by the Administration are limited to essential consumer goods for immediate needs, such as food, fuel, clothing, shelter, and medical supplies; and materials (such as seeds, fertilizers, raw materials, fishing equipment, machinery and spare parts) needed to enable a recipient country to produce and transport relief supplies. Its services are to include health and welfare assistance, aid in the repatriation or return of displaced persons, and rehabilitation of public utilities so far as they can be repaired or restored to meet immediate needs. These supplies and services are to be furnished only to victims of war in areas liberated from enemy occupation. This means, first, that no attempt was made by the Council to consider measures of relief and rehabilitation in enemy or ex-enemy territories, except for measures that may be in the interest of the United Nations (such as prevention of epidemics); and, second, that the scope of UNRRA activities does not include countries not occupied by the enemy, for example, India.

2. UNRRA AND COMBINED BOARDS. It was agreed, from the outset, that the activities of the Administration should be "so conducted that they do not impede the effective prosecution of the war,"

and should be carried out in fullest collaboration with the military authorities in any given area. Therefore, it appeared essential that "demands upon supplies and shipping presented by the Administration should be coordinated with other demands through the use of existing intergovernmental agencies concerned with the allocation of supplies and shipping."

The relations of the Administration with such agencies raised a crucial question, since the agencies most directly concerned are the so-called Combined Boards (on food, raw materials, shipping, and production and resources) on which Britain, the United States and, in two instances, Canada are represented. The small nations of Europe, some of which even in wartime are supplying nations either because they have shipping (Norway, Holland and France), or because their colonies are sources of United Nations materials (Holland, France and Belgium), would like to be represented on the Combined Boards. Failing that, these countries, which still have gold and foreign exchange and expect to pay in full for any relief supplies they may acquire, wanted to have direct access to the Combined Boards, by-passing UNRRA. Such an arrangement would have placed at a serious disadvantage countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Greece, which have little or no gold and foreign exchange and will therefore need to receive relief either as an outright gift or through some form of lend-lease procedure, and would have defeated the very purpose for which UNRRA has been created.

The compromise finally reached was that all member governments shall keep UNRRA fully informed of all their relief and rehabilitation requirements, "whatever arrangements may be contemplated for procurement or finance." Director General Herbert H. Lehman, for his part, will present before the intergovernmental allocating agencies "the over-all requirements for relief and rehabilitation of all areas liberated and to be liberated in order to permit a global consideration of these needs with all other needs." The successful working out of this compromise will depend on the degree of cooperation given the Administration both by the principal supplying countries which control the Combined Boards, and by the countries in need of relief which have gold, foreign exchange and ships at their disposal. Final decision in all cases will presumably rest with the Combined Boards working in close collaboration with the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF. Once relief supplies have been obtained, allocated, and transported to a given area, such supplies, according to a decision of the Council, shall "at no time" be used "as a political weapon, and no discrimination shall be made in the distribution of supplies because of

race, creed or political belief." An element of flexibility, however, was introduced by the recommendation that "relief in all its aspects shall be distributed or dispensed fairly on the basis of the relative needs of the population in the area," and by the provision that, "in determining the relative needs of the population, there may be taken into account the diverse needs caused by discriminatory treatment by the enemy during its occupation of the area." This would make it possible for UNRRA to give priorities on supplies for those groups—for example, Jews in Poland, or civilian hostages from all occupied countries—specially discriminated against by the Nazis.

It was agreed that, in general, the responsibility for distribution of relief and rehabilitation supplies within a given area should be borne "by the government or recognized national authority which exercises administrative authority in the area." Delegates representing a number of the occupied countries of Europe—notably those of Western Europe—made it clear that their governments intend to handle the distribution of supplies (especially those they have paid for in full) through their own distribution channels, and expressed the belief that they have sufficient personnel and adequate machinery for the performance of this task. A different situation is expected to exist in the countries of Eastern Europe and in Asia, and the problems of individual countries will have to be explored through negotiations between their governments and the Director General. While the Council recommended that "the Director General should be kept fully informed concerning the distribution of relief and rehabilitation supplies within any recipient areas," it made no provision for on-the-spot observation by UNRRA officials of the extent to which its recommendations concerning nondiscriminatory distribution are being fulfilled.

4. DISPLACED PERSONS. There was considerable discussion, during the Council meeting, regarding the categories of displaced persons for whose repatriation or return UNRRA should be responsible. It was finally decided that UNRRA should assist not only the repatriation of citizens of the various United Nations to their countries of origin, but also the return of United Nations nationals and of stateless persons "who have been driven as a result of the war from their places of settled residence in countries of which they are not nationals, to those places." This provision would empower UNRRA, for example, to arrange for the return to Burma, the Malay States, or the Philippines of Chinese residing in these areas before the war instead of repatriating them automatically to China; and also to return stateless Jews, Russians and so on to countries, other than those of their origin, in which they may have been residing

before the Nazi invasion. UNRRA, however, is not to have any responsibility for the repatriation of prisoners of war unless requested by the member government concerned.

5. FINANCING OF UNRRA. The question of financing the work of UNRRA was another major item on the agenda of the Council. The financial plan finally adopted after considerable redrafting was that introduced by the United States. This plan provides that "each member whose home territory has not been occupied by the enemy shall make a contribution for participation in the work of the Administration, approximately equivalent to one per cent of the national income of the country for the year ending June 30, 1943 as determined by the member government." The Council, however, recognized "that there are cases in which its recommendations may conflict with particular demands arising from the continuance of the war or may be excessively burdensome because of peculiar situations," and that the amount and character of the contribution recommended should be subject to such conditions. Member governments in this category may, of course, contribute additional amounts, while those whose homelands are now occupied may contribute, if they wish, to the work of Administration outside their own territory.

It is estimated that the total cost of UNRRA operations for a contemplated two-year period will be between two and two and a half billion dollars, of which the United States, on the basis of one per cent of its 1943 national income, would contribute about 60 per cent (probably \$1,135,000,000), and the United Kingdom 15 per cent (about \$320,000,000), the balance being contributed by the British Dominions, India, and the countries of Latin America. It should be pointed out that, in the period 1917-21 the United States, through private contributions and government grants, contributed over two billion dollars to the relief of war-stricken Europe. The fear expressed in some quarters that UNRRA would become a sort of international WPA was answered by Director General Lehman on December 10, when he told the House Foreign Affairs Committee that UNRRA's resources "must be used only to meet the most pressing needs," and "not dissipated in financing long-range reconstruction projects, however sound and praiseworthy they may be." The success of UNRRA, he added, "must be measured by the speed with which it is able to liquidate itself; the sooner it becomes unnecessary, the greater will have been its accomplishments."

My Native Land, by Louis Adamic. New York, Harper, 1943. \$3.75

Authentic and vivid story of Yugoslavia's resistance to the Axis and the civil war now raging between Chetniks and Partisans. Adamic believes the Big Three's attitude toward the Partisans will determine future Allied policy with respect to other people's movements throughout the world.

Here Is Your War, by Ernie Pyle. New York, Henry Holt, 1943. \$3.00

One more book on North Africa, but with a difference. Running along with the story of the campaign and the soldiers' lives is the warm chronicle of personal anecdotes which make good reading for those at home.

The Lady and the Tigers, by Olga S. Greenlaw. New York, Dutton, 1943. \$3.00

To the brilliant story of the Flying Tigers the wife of Chennault's Chief of Staff adds an exciting, warmly personal tribute, with a neat bit of malice toward some of their other chroniclers.

Way for America, by Alexander Laing. New York, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1942. \$3.50

Librarian, novelist and poet, the author assails the faults of those at home and abroad who claimed to serve democratic ideals in pre-war days. He makes a studiously passionate appeal for what he defines as real democracy.

Trees and Test Tubes, by Charles Morrow Wilson. New York, Henry Holt, 1943. \$3.50

An interestingly written history of rubber, which relates it to the present crisis. Better on the natural than the synthetic product, because the author has lived on a Central American experimental plantation. Text of the Baruch report is included.

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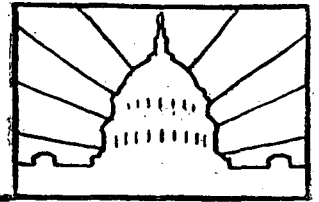
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Washington News Letter



DEC. 13.—What Republicans say now on American foreign policy is heard around the world. Officials of allied and neutral countries give weight to their words because they cannot disregard the possibility of a Republican victory in the 1944 Presidential election. Some of the views currently expressed by Republicans are so reserved that foreign observers here are beginning to wonder whether, in spite of the Moscow Declaration and the Connally Resolution, it can yet be assumed that the United States will remain in political partnership with other countries after the war.

HAS ROOSEVELT A DEFINABLE POLICY?

Republicans of isolationist background hesitate to make direct criticisms of President Roosevelt's course in foreign affairs, but some of them question it obliquely. Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio wrote, for example, in the December 11 *Saturday Evening Post*: "It is quite true that behind a front of simple cooperation the President may conceal a real intention to bring about an international state or an imperialist British-American control of the world." As it happens, a British-American alliance was advocated by Thomas E. Dewey, Republican Governor of New York, not by President Roosevelt. On December 4 Alfred M. Landon, Republican Presidential candidate in 1936, asked a group of Senators: "Just what foreign policy does the President stand for?"

Until Landon spoke, it was believed here that the foreign policy of the Administration was plain, and had two main objectives: (1) to win the war in close alliance with the other United Nations; and (2) to participate in an international peace-keeping political agency after the war. The second point was subscribed to by Secretary of State Hull at Moscow and was subsequently incorporated in the Connally Resolution, which the Senate passed by a vote of 85 to 5. It is true that the Administration has not explained in detail exactly what it hopes to accomplish through the general international political organization called for by the Moscow accord or how it expects that organization to avoid the weaknesses of the League of Nations. It is difficult to see, however, how this could have been done in advance of the Cairo and Teheran conferences at which, it is assumed, Britain, Russia, China and the United States did explore various aspects of post-war international collaboration.

SURFACE AGREEMENT ON POSTWAR. In spite of this, there is, outwardly at least, remarkable national agreement on the postwar issue. The Ad-

ministration has sought to achieve an aim that would have the support of the country rather than merely the Democratic party. The Republican party itself, through its Postwar Advisory Council, adopted a resolution at Mackinac Island on September 7 calling for "responsible participation by the United States in a post-war organization among sovereign nations to prevent military aggression and to obtain permanent peace with organized justice in the world." Thus the Mackinac Resolution agrees both with the aim of the Moscow Declaration and the Connally Resolution—an international organization, and with their philosophy—anti-isolationism.

The sensitiveness of politicians to the current strength of this philosophy was shown on December 9, when Herbert Hoover, the last Republican President, tried to make amends for Landon's statement. He issued a statement to the press in New York on December 8 that Landon had not opposed the Moscow Declaration, nor was he against the inclusion of an identical foreign policy plank in the Republican and Democratic platforms next year.

The positions taken by Landon in his talk to the Senators and by Taft in his *Saturday Evening Post* article are reminiscent of 1919, when Senator Henry Cabot Lodge told Jim Watson that he did not propose to try to beat the Versailles Treaty "by frontal attack, but by the indirect method." Lodge's indirect method consisted of insistence on reservations; that of Landon and Taft on planting suspicions that the Administration has a hidden purpose in its espousal of international cooperation. Nor is it encouraging to hear pronouncements by influential businessmen at gatherings such as the National Association of Manufacturers which indicate the belief that the United States can sell its goods after the war to an impoverished world, yet still refuse to take the goods of other countries in payment.

Under the circumstances, it is difficult for the other United Nations to know what our foreign policy is going to be when the war ends. They cannot tell how influential conservative Republican thought will prove to be; nor can they forecast what tack a Republican Administration would take, since Republicans disagree among themselves. The United States, in the eyes of the world, seems highly undependable. For, six weeks after Secretary Hull had negotiated an agreement and Congress had voted to support his policy, some political leaders already hint they are reconsidering the matter.

BLAIR BOLLES

1918—TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE F.P.A.—1943